



UNITED STATES ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20460

SEP 30 2008

OFFICE OF WATER

MEMORANDUM

SUBJECT: *National Water Program Strategy: Response to Climate Change*

FROM: Benjamin H. Grumbles
Assistant Administrator

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "B H Grumbles", is written over the printed name and title of Benjamin H. Grumbles.

TO: Interested Parties

I am pleased to announce the release of the *National Water Program Strategy: Response to Climate Change*. This document is an important effort by EPA's National Water Program to identify potential impacts of climate change for clean water and drinking water programs and define actions to respond to these impacts.

Over a year ago, I charged an internal EPA workgroup with the task of reviewing the likely impacts of climate change on water resources and water programs and asked that the workgroup develop a strategy for responding to climate change impacts. In March of this year, EPA released a draft climate change and water strategy for comment. The final document we are releasing today reflects the input we received from a wide range of interested parties on the draft document.

As indicated in the final *Strategy*, climate change is likely to have a range of impacts on water resources including:

- increases in certain water pollution problems;
- changes to availability of drinking water supplies; and
- significant collective impacts on coastal areas.

The *Strategy* describes 44 specific actions that the National Water Program will take to respond appropriately to climate change in topic areas including adaptation, mitigation, research, and education. Some examples of these actions are:

- develop new tools to assure that water discharge permits reflect climate change impacts on waterbodies;
- support estuary response plans through the "Climate Ready Estuaries Program";
- improve energy/water savings at sewage treatment plants; and
- integrate climate change information into existing training programs for water professionals.

The EPA workgroup that developed the *Strategy* will monitor progress in implementation and will review and revise the document as needed.

I look forward to working with you on this important effort.